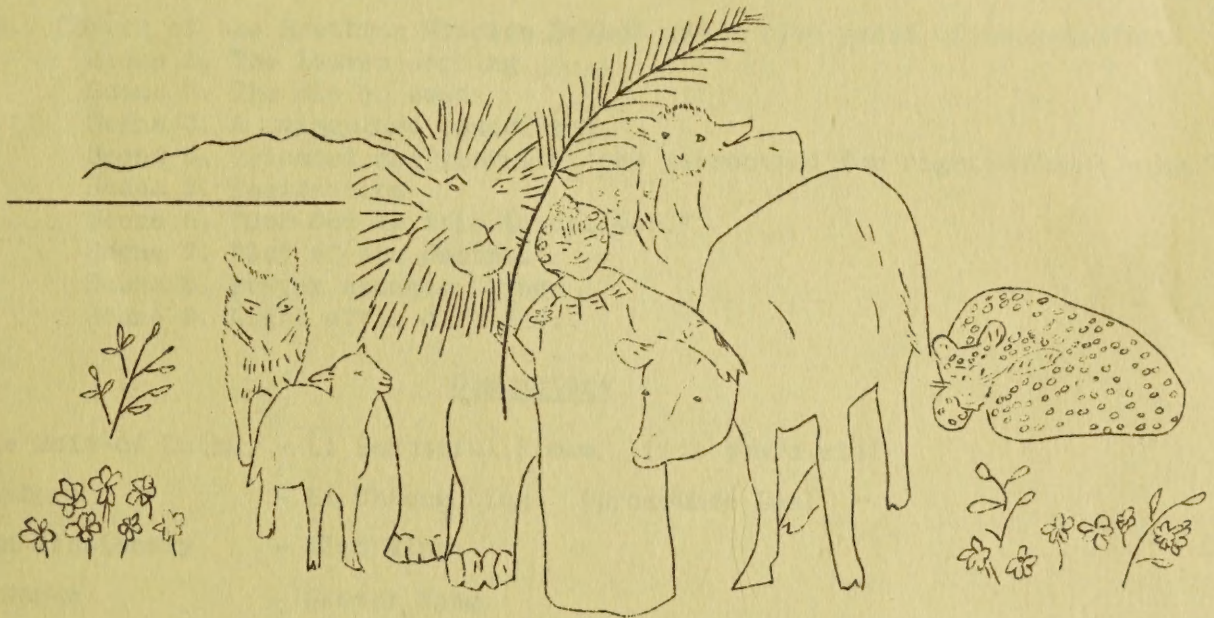


A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM



A PLAY ON CHINA

by

V. Grace Clapper
Missionary to China

* * *

Price 10 cents

* * *

General Mission Board
Church of the Brethren
22 South State Street
Elgin, Illinois

THE LITTLE CHURCH

WILLIAM L. E. AND OTHERS



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"A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM"

Written by Grace Clapper

Synopsis:

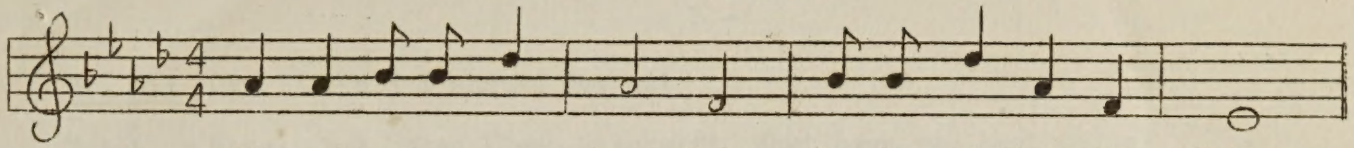
- Act I. The Home of Mr. Li Ch'eng Ling in the village of Chang Chia Nao, among the mountains of Shansi, China. A Streak of Ill Luck.
- Act II. Under the big ash tree in front of Mr. Li's courtyard. The Gospel Messenger arrives at Chang Chia Nao.
- Act III. Mr. Li's Living room, three years after the Message arrives.
Scene 1. Off for Mission School
Scene 2. Some vain regrets
- Act IV. Church of the Brethren Mission School after five years of seed-sowing.
Scene 1. The leaven working
Scene 2. The die is cast
Scene 3. A misguided conscience
Scene 4. "Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake."
Scene 5. Resignation
Scene 6. "Our God is able to deliver."
Scene 7. "Out of the depths."
Scene 8. Prayer changes things
Scene 9. Light after darkness.

Characters

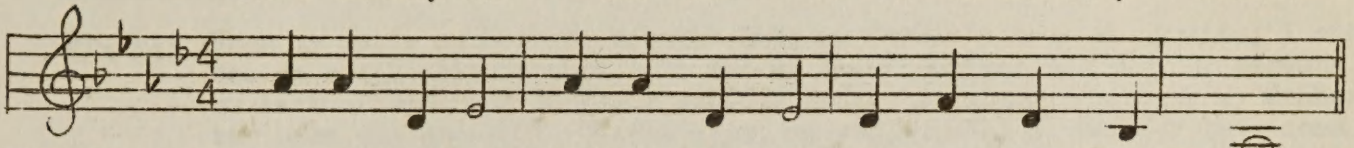
Village Maid of Cathay - Li Beautiful Flower (six years old)
Her Father - Li Ch'eng Ling (pronounce Lee)
Foreign Missionary - Miss Ming
Bible Woman - Sister Wang
Neighbor Wang - Mr. Wang
Mrs. Li - Mother Li (pronounce Lee)
Older sister - "Bring a Son" (sixteen years old)
Eldest son - Lao Ta, also brother, in play
Second son - Erh Hsiao, also brother in play
Third son - San Hsiao, also brother in play
Fourth son - Ssu Hsiao
Neighbor Yang, the would-be father-in-law of Beautiful Flower.
Donkey driver - Lao Yang
Two school teachers - Miss Wang and Miss Chao
Five classmates - First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth
Gateman

Crowd at the street meeting, from five to ten people, several of whom speak as noted in Act III.

THERE IS ONLY ONE TRUE GOD



There is only one true God It is our Heavenly Father.



He gives us food He gives us clothes Pities us every day.

A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

ACT I.

Scene:

Mr. Li's home in the village of Chang Chia Nao. A table placed against the wall in the rear of the room, with a chair at each end. An incense burner on the table, and holders containing sticks of incense. A small cupboard-like aperture in the wall containing the idols of the household. Mr. Li occupies one chair, smoking a long Chinese pipe when Neighbor Wang arrives.

Neighbor Wang: Good Morning Mr. Li, have you eaten your food?

Mr. Li: Oh, yes, and forgotten about it for a whole hour. Please sit.

Neighbor Wang: I came over to congratulate you upon the arrival of your second daughter. (Makes several polite bows and sits down upon the unoccupied chair, at the other end of the table.)

Mr. Li: Please stop making fun of me if you are my friend. Early this morning I was minded to take that good-for-nothing little piece, and pitch it over the city wall for the wolves to breakfast on, but it's mother's older sister was Present and objected seriously. Otherwise your congratulations would have been nothing more than wasted breath.

Neighbor Wang: Well you certainly don't seem to be much elated over the event. You have only one girl and I thought you'd be glad.

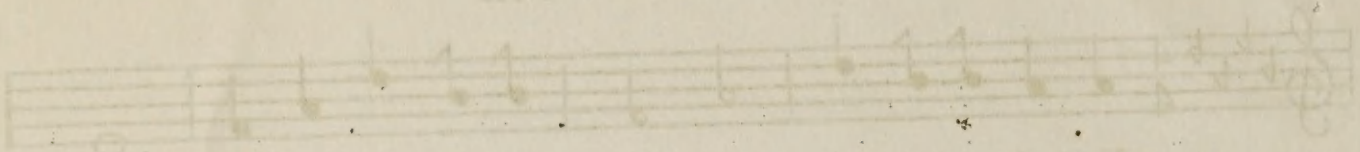
Mr. Li: Glad? (Baby crying in next room) How could I be glad with that squeaking noise? I've been pestered with it since one o'clock, and I haven't shut an eye all night!

Leo Wang: But look at your other daughter, your firstborn, isn't she a likely child, and not too bad looking? And won't she make a fairly capable daughter-in-law for Neighbor Sung? I hear you got a fair price for her, and raising girls isn't exactly a losing proposition when you can get a price like that for them.

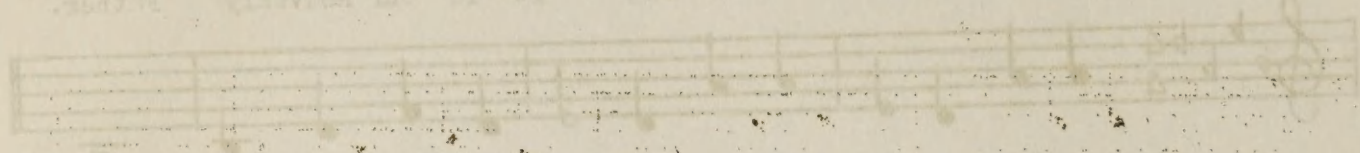
Mr. Li: Oh, perhaps not altogether, but one girl in a family is quite enough. What bothers me more, is the fact that the gods are displeased with me, therefore, this streak of ill luck.

Neighbor Wang: Cheer up, cheer up, old man, perhaps it's not as bad as you think. Can you think of any reason why they should be displeased?

THESE IS ONLY ONE TRUE GOD



THESE IS ONLY ONE TRUE GOD



THESE IS ONLY ONE TRUE GOD

A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

ACT I

Mr. Li's home in the village of Chang Chia Hwa. A table placed against the wall in the rear of the room, with a chair at each end. An incense burner on the table, and bottles containing sticks of incense. A small cup-like apparatus in the wall containing the incense of the household. Mr. Li, wearing one robe, seeking a long Chinese pipe when Neighbor Wang arrives.

Neighbor Wang: Good morning Mr. Li, have you eaten your food?

Mr. Li: Oh yes, and forgotten about it for a whole hour. Please sit.

Neighbor Wang: I came over to congratulate you upon the arrival of your second daughter. (Makes several polite bows and sits down upon the unoccupied chair, at the other end of the table.)

Mr. Li: Please stop making fun of me. If you are my friend, bring this morning I was obliged to take that good-for-nothing little slave, and give it over the city hall for the money to President Ma, but it's mother's sister sister was present and objected seriously. Otherwise your congratulations would have been nothing more than wasted breath.

Neighbor Wang: Tell me certainly don't seem to be much excited over the event. You have only one girl and I thought you'd be glad.

Mr. Li: Glad? Why crying in your robe? How could I be glad with that queer-looking woman? I've been bothered with it since our wedding, and I haven't slept a wink all night!

Neo Wang: But look at your other daughter, your firstborn, isn't she a likely child, and now too good-looking? And what's she make a fairly capable daughter-in-law for Neighbor Wang? I told you she's a fair price for her, and that's what I'm saying. I'm saying a losing proposition when you get a price like that for her.

Mr. Li: Oh, please don't disagree, but one girl in a family is quite enough. What better bargain, is the fact that the gods are displeased with me, therefore, I'm afraid of all that.

Neighbor Wang: Cheer up, old man, perhaps it's not so bad as you think. Can you think of any reason why they should be displeased?

Mr. Li: Can I? Well I should say so!

Neighbor Wang: Hm! Then blame yourself! What have you been doing?

Mr. Li: When my son's mother was brought into my father's home as my wife, I sure was an obstreperous youth. It was my chief delight to worry my parents by my lack of devotion to their beloved gods. I remember hearing my mother say upon one occasion, "Never mind, my son, you'll suffer for this some day and be sorry when it's too late." But I never took it seriously until about three months before my first daughter was born. Of course, I was hoping for a son, and kept talking about "my son," when one day my mother said to me, "Yes your 'son' will likely be a girl." I replied, "Well if that be the case, she will either be thrown away or given to some one."

Neighbor Wang: Ha! Ha! and there she sits smiling at your stupidity, neither thrown away nor given away!

"Bring a Son"- (retiring in disgust): It's great to be born a girl isn't it?

Mr. Li: Well, I just want to tell you that these words of my mother's aroused my religious fervor as nothing else ever did. From that day I began to be very zealous in the performance of my religious duties. So much so, that my parents marvelled, and wondered what had suddenly come over me. But one dreary, rainy day, the 15th of the 7th month, the gods wreaked vengeance upon me for my lack of reverence in the former days, by sending me a daughter! I was so angry that I left home and went to my maternal uncle's home and stayed for a week. I hoped that when I returned the youngster would be dead or given away. But contrary to my wishes, it was still alive, hearty and lusty looking, and what was more surprising, my mother and the child's mother seemed fond of it and had named her "Bring a Son." I, myself, was pleased with that idea and decided that I would turn over a new leaf, and try my best to be a religious enthusiast. It sure worked, for in ten years four sons were born to us.

Neighbor Wang: Well, I can bear testimony to the fact that you WERE religious in those ten years for it was the talk of the town, how our friend was always burning incense before the gods, or on his knees before the Ancestral Tablets. But if such be the case, how do you account for the birth of this second girl? Why not be reasonable and say that she, too, is a gift from the gods?

Mr. Li: Ah, good neighbor it cannot be! I must confess, however, that with the failure of last year's crops, and the coming of the "Godless Society" into our village, my religious fervor has been only a form to please my parents. My faith has grown very cold. Verily I got to the place where I believed with them that there were no gods, and I wanted to join their organization. In order to prevent bringing sorrow into my parents lives in their old age, I became a secret member, and now? Woe is me, this is my punishment!

Neighbor Wang: I agree with you neighbor that it does not pay to lose our religion. Furthermore, while we may keep up a show of religion on the outside, the gods know well our hearts and deal with us accordingly. But I must be going, as I promised to help neighbor Chang shear sheep today. Cheer up old man and try to make the best of a difficult situation. Better withdraw your name from the roll of the "Godless Society" and make due restitution. Goodbye!

Mr. Li: (escorting him to the door) Goodby Old Wang, come again!

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CURTAIN FALLS

Scene 2:

(3 years later) Another room in the Li home. Mother and "Bring a Son" (1st daughter) sitting on the Kang (for the brick bed use a big box 18" by 18" x 3 or 4 feet). Baby sitting on Kang, a few rags covering upper part of body, father, eldest son, and 4th son sitting on benches at the ends of the Kang.

Mother: Oh my! This child was certainly born to live. We pay no attention to her. I'm so busy I forget to feed here except when she cries, and she seldom cries, and yet she's plump and hearty looking.

Bring a Son: She's cute too, and getting prettier every day. Let's dress her up mother. She looks so neglected in those old tattered rags!

Father: Yes, I should say so, it's a disgrace to wrap a child in those old filthy rags. I wore that old coat when I was a youngster of ten, and I doubt if it's ever been washed.

Mother: We'll buy us some cloth to make it some clothes and we'll gladly make them. You're always growling about it taking so much money to keep us women folks in clothes, and we wear nothing but rags.

Bring a Son: Get some pretty flowered outing cloth for her trousers.

4th Son: And some pretty red cloth for a stomach warmer.

Eldest Son: What's happened to all you folks? You used to wish the kid were dead, and mother always fretted and fussed and said it was a trouble and a waste of time to stop work and feed her. Sister wished she'd get sick and die so she'd have more time to make her wedding togs. Dad was always provoked when she woke him up at night by her crying, and now look at all you, getting good all at once, huh?

Bring a Son: Oh you think you're smart, don't you? You never did have to mind her a single minute of your life, and she never interfered with your plans.

Father: (taking up child and looking at it with admiring eyes) Say, I'm going to name this child, she ought to have a name.

Eldest Son: Yes I think so too. Name her No Good.

Bring a Son: Oh you smarty!

Father: I'm going to name her Beautiful Flower for she's just like a beautiful flower, with her round plump face, and her sweet disposition.

Eldest Son: (snickering) Beautiful Flower!!

CURTAIN FALLS.

Act II

(6 years from beginning of story)

Scene 1:

Under the trees in front of the gate of the Li court. A missionary lad, a Chinese Bible Woman, a donkey driver, Mr. and Mrs. Li, their four sons and two daughters.

When the missionary party arrives, Mrs. Li and Bring a Son become very frightened, and scamper into the house and peep through the holes in the paper windows. Beautiful Flower stands shyly in the background until her father nervously clutches her up, carries her through the gateway and hides her in a dark cave room. He returns immediately and talks to the party in front of the gate; (The cave room mentioned is simply a dark room in one end of their cave-dwelling, used as a cellar.)

Missionary: How do you do, sir, May I ask your honorable Name?

Mr. Li: My humble name is Li and what is your honorable name?

Missionary: My name is Ming, and this lady's (Bible Woman) is Wang. May we trouble you to rest in the shade of your trees while we eat our lunch and feed our animals?

Mr. Li: Certainly you may and no trouble at all. I, myself, will feed your animals, and the boys' mother will prepare food for you.

Missionary: Thank you very much Mr. Li, but we have brought our own food and grain for our animals as well. You are too kind.

Mr. Li: Oh come in, we have food already prepared for you.

Missionary: Thanks very much, but we will eat our own food today. We have some pictures we would like to show you, and some tracts. Can you read, Mr. Li?

Mr. Li: Oh, I know about two characters. What country are you from Venerable teacher, and where do you live?

Missionary: I am an American, I live at the County seat, and I am a teacher of the Jesus religion.

Mr. Li: Oh yes, I've heard of the Jesus religion. It's very good. Any kind of religion is good. People who are not religious are usually very unlucky.

Missionary: (opening up lunch and preparing to eat) Have you eaten Mr. Li?

Mr. Li: Oh yes I have eaten. We eat two meals each day, about 10 o'clock in the morning and seven o'clock in the evening, or whenever the work's done.

Missionary: (to Bible woman) Sister Wang, please return thanks.

Bible Woman: We thank Thee our Father, etc.

Mr. Li: (to Bible woman) Do you eat the same kind of food the foreigner does?

Bible Woman: Oh no, I seldom eat foreign food. I eat the same kind of food you do.

Mr. Li: How much money do you get for working for the foreigner?

Bible Woman: Oh I get enough for my food and clothing, but I am not working for the foreigner, Mr. Li, I'm working for the Lord, our Heavenly Father.

Mr. Li: The foreign teacher has lots of money I dare say, do you know how much she gets per month.

Missionary: (interfering) Are these all your sons Mr. Li?

Mr. Li. (proudly) Yes, I am not worthy, but I have four sons and a little girl.

Missionary: Oh, you are greatly blest Mr. Li. Where is your little girl?

Mr. Li: Oh she's with her ma.

Missionary: How old is your eldest son?

Mr. Li: He is fifteen, the 2nd is twelve, the 3rd is ten, the 4th is eight, and the little girl is six

Missionary: Why does not the little girl and her mother come out. We'd like very much to see them too.

Mr. Li: Oh, they are afraid of foreigners and all strangers for that matter as they seldom get outside the gate.

Missionary: They shouldn't be afraid. We really aren't dangerous people. We came to bring you very good news. Here let me give the boys a cookie apiece, and take this one to your little sister. These cookies are made with your flour, but in the foreign way, and you've probably never eaten any before.

Mr. Li: (aside to sons) Don't you dare eat them.

Missionary: I hear a child crying, could that be your little girl, Mr. Li:

Mr. Li: Yes, that Beautiful Flower. I suppose her mother has punished her. She's full of life and always getting into mischief.

Missionary: Mr. Li, wouldn't you like to look at some of the pictures we have brought with us?

Mr. Li: Yes of course we would. The boys all like to look at pictures.

Missionary: Here is one with a very important meaning. Do you see the big cross here in the center? Now, Sister Wang will tell you a very interesting story about this cross if you will listen.

Bible Woman: Perhaps your neighbors would like to hear it too. You call all your neighbors, and we'll tack this picture onto your wall, and you can all hear the story at once. Do you think they would like to hear it?

Mr. Li: I fear not, as they are very busy threshing now. I, myself, am very busy too, and I hope you'll come again when I'm not so busy.

Bible Woman: So you can't stay either?

Mr. Li: No I'd love too, but I just don't have time today. Come boys! (leads boys off to threshing floor on the house roof.)

Bible Woman: Apparently these folks aren't much interested. As soon as we suggested calling the neighbors, they were ready to leave.

Missionary: We might leave our things here with the donkey driver, and go up street a ways and see if we can get a crowd. Where is the donkey driver?

Bible Woman: Did you notice how eager he was to get that little girl away from us?

Missionary: Yes, she must be very precious to him. I suppose he was afraid we'd carry her off and make medicine out of her heart and eyes.

Bible Woman: Yes, he must think a lot of her, for it isn't often that a Chinese father mentions his girls when speaking about his family.

Missionary: Oh that's right. Who do you suppose she was, a neighbor?

Bible Woman: See - what did her father call her? Oh Beautiful Flower. Beautiful Flower, come here let me give you a pretty card. Did your brother give you a cookie?

Beautiful Flower: (coming slowly, shyly, and cautiously) No, he did not.

Missionary: Come here to me, Beautiful Flower. I'll give you a cookie and a pretty card too. Don't be afraid. We love little girls and like to talk to them.

Bible Woman: (Taking Beautiful Flower in her lap) Isn't she pretty? Look at those eyes. How old are you Beautiful Flower?

Beautiful Flower: (Keeping her eye on the threshing floor) I'm six years old.

Bible Woman: How many brothers and sisters have you?

Beautiful Flower: I have four brothers and one sister.

Bible Woman: Oh, you have a sister too. How old is she and where is she?

Beautiful Flower: She's sixteen, and she's in the house with mother. She's afraid of the foreign lady.

Missionary: (Appearing not to have heard) So your mother has two girls, a big one and a little one. Can you sing, Beautiful Flower?

Beautiful Flower: I don't know, I never tried.

Missionary: We will sing and you listen a few times, and by and by you can sing with us. I'll tell you first what we are going to sing. The first line is: "There is only one true God, and that is our Father in Heaven." Can you say that? (See music)

Beautiful Flower: There is only one true God, and that is our Father in Heaven.

Missionary: That's fine. Now the second: "He gives us food and clothing and pities us every day."

Beautiful Flower: Recites 2nd line.

Bible Woman: Isn't she cute, and so bright!

Missionary: She surely is. No wonder her father had to tell about her. I don't blame him. Now let's sing. You help us Beautiful Flower. (Missionary and Bible Woman sing the first verse twice and the third time, to their surprise Beautiful Flower with her eye on the threshing floor, sings with them, but very, very softly.)

Missionary: Fine. Indeed you CAN sing. Now let's sing some more.

(They continue to sing and the music attracts the father and sons who come to the edge of the threshing floor and are horrified to see the little girl who has escaped from the dark cave room where she was penned up for safety, sitting in the lap of the missionary singing happily. They appear on the scene hastily, the father half angry, and yet too polite to rebuke Little Flower in the presence of the strangers).

Beautiful Flower: (Happily forgetting her recent escape from prison). Father, I can sing. Just listen to me: (Sings with Missionary and Bible Woman) (The father half jealous and half fearful, lifts her from the missionary's lap, and holds her in his brawny arms, while he continues to converse with them for politeness' sake.)

Missionary: Do you understand what we were singing, Mr. Li?

Mr. Li: Oh, yes, I understood the little girl, but I didn't know a word you said.

Missionary: What did she sing about?

Mr. Li: Oh she was singing about the Venerable Heavenly Father.

Missionary: So you know the Heavenly Father.

Mr. Li: Well I guess I do. We're all dependent upon him and couldn't live without him.

Missionary: You are exactly right, Mr. Li. (crowd slowly gathering)

Mr. Li: If he didn't give us sunshine and rain, we'd have nothing to eat.

Voices in the crowd: Right, right, right,

Missionary: I'm so glad you all believe in the Heavenly Father. Have you ever heard of His Son Jesus?

Mr. Li: (laughing) His son? Oh, does the Heavenly Father have a son? No, I have never heard of him, where does he stay?

Missionary: His name is Jesus Christ, and He lives in the hearts of the people who believe in Him, and do the will of His Father and our Father, whom you call "The Venerable Heavenly Father."

Mr. Li: (lightly to members of the crowd) Now this IS new doctrine, hey fellows, we're learning something new.

Missionary: If you want to learn to know Jesus Christ, you must worship the Heavenly Father who is His Father, also do His will. Do you worship the gods, Mr. Li?

Mr. Li: Oh yes, of course I worship the gods. Our whole family does. We must worship them. (crowd still getting larger)

Missionary: If you believe in the true God our Heavenly Father, and that you are dependent upon Him for your very existence, then why worship gods of wood and stone, Mr. Li?

Mr. Li: (To Bible Woman) Is this foreigner a man or a woman?

Bible Woman: Why a woman of course, look at her hair!

Mr. Li: But she has such big feet! Were her feet never bound?

Bible Woman: No never. In America they have no such custom.

Mr. Li: If a Chinese girl's feet are not bound, will they grow as large as this foreign woman's feet. (to the crowd) My first daughter's feet were bound, but she went on at such a great rate, that I didn't have the heart to bind Beautiful Flowers. Really when you come to think of it, that is a foolish custom. I almost wish it would die out here as it has in some places.

Missionary: Mr. Li since you can read will you please for your neighbors?
(Opens up a scroll containing the Ten Commandments) Just read the first one for a beginning.

Mr. Li: (slowly and falteringly) "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Missionary: Very well, do you know the meaning of that?

Woman in crowd: (to Bible Woman) How old is she, this foreigner?

Bible Woman: (disapprovingly) Oh, around forty. You listen to what she is saying.

Woman: Oh I can't understand a thing she says.

Another Woman: How many children has she?

Bible Woman: (softly) Not any, she's an unmarried woman. Please listen.

Woman: Around forty and not married. How queer! (laughs)

Another woman: Forty years old and hasn't lost her teeth yet?

Missionary: (to woman) Honorable Lady, do you worship the Heavenly Father?

Woman: Ha! Ha! I don't know what you said. Is she speaking Chinese or American?

Missionary: (to same woman) How old are you lady?

Woman: I am sixty-eight.

Missionary: And how many sons have you?

Woman: I have three sons.

Missionary: Listen lady, do you worship the Heavenly Father?

Woman to Bystanders: What does she say?

Missionary: Mr. Li, since you feel you are dependent upon the one true God, don't you think you are violating this commandment when you worship other gods?

Mr. Li: (bewilderingly) I don't know. Do you have a Venerable Heavenly Father in America too?

Missionary: There is only one true God and that is our Heavenly Father. He is all powerful, all-knowing, and everywhere present. He is the God of the Americans, the Chinese, the English and the Japanese.

Mr. Li: Oh does he love the Japanese too, does he think they are good people?

Missionary: He loves all nations, but he hates sin and wrong doing in any nation.

Woman of the crowd: Does she make her own clothes? What does she eat that makes her face so white?

Mr. Li: How long does it take to come from America to China?

Missionary: Oh a very long time; about a month. Now let's sing our song again. Where is Beautiful Flower? Beautiful Flower, come and help us sing! (All sing one verse three times)

Missionary: Mr. Li, a bright little girl like this one of your's should be in school learning to read.

Mr. Li: Beautiful Flower read? "My four boys all go to the village school for a month or two each year, but girls couldn't learn to read. My neighbor Chang sent one of his to a school for girls in the city, and she was there a whole week and didn't learn a single character.

Missionary: But Mr. Li. Beautiful Flower already knows all the characters in this first stanza. Just listen if you don't believe it. (She reads, "There is only one God." etc.)

Mr. Li: (astonished) Oh, no she couldn't leave home, she's only six you see. Perhaps by and by we can have a teacher come here to teach her.

Missionary: Well, we must be going. It will be late till we get home, for we must stop at a village on the way home.

Beautiful Flower: (shyly) When are you coming again?

Missionary: (to father) Mr. Li shall we come again?

Mr. Li: Oh yes, indeed, come again. (The missionary party departs with good-byes and low bows, while the crowd stands watching them and chattering until they can be seen no more, when mother and sister come sulkily out of the court and join the crowd at the gate)

Mother Li: (disgustedly) A great day this has been for Bring a Son and myself. You (to Father Li) entertaining a foreign devil, and having us penned up in that manner so that we accomplished practically nothing the whole day. You know very well that this is not time to be sitting around doing nothing.

Father Li: Penned up? Who penned you up? Why didn't you come out and show yourselves and join the fun?

Mother Li: No indeed, I'll have nothing to do with foreign devils and foreign doctrine! And YOU (to Beautiful Flower, with a sharp rap on the head) you little minx, crawling out of the cellar window to see and hear a foreign devil and her running dog!

Mr. Li: You're getting very conscientious all at once. It isn't the foreign doctrine that you dislike, for you know nothing about it, it's the foreign devil that you're afraid of, and you might just as well confess it. You don't have as much courage as little Beautiful Flower. She wasn't afraid.

Mother Li: Yes talk about courage. You were afraid yourself otherwise you wouldn't have penned Beautiful Flower in the cave room.

Bring a Son: I wasn't afraid. I wanted to go out to see and hear, but mother wouldn't allow me.

Mother Li: No, of course you weren't afraid, you're not afraid of anything but work. Now get a move on, and get some coal here quickly. The kitchen fire is almost out. I wanted to light it up an hour ago, but I couldn't get out to get coal, so now all of you can just WAIT FOR your supper.

CURTAIN FALLS

Act III. (Nine years from beginning)

Scene 1:

Bedroom in the Li home. Nine year old Beautiful Flower wakes up long before daylight and lies still dreaming of the new life that begins for her on this happy day. As the newly risen sun peeps through the latticed windows of her room, lighting up her countenance, revealing a face of unusual Oriental beauty, she sits up and soliloquizes.

Beautiful Flower: Oh, joy, this is the day I go off to school. I was never so happy in all my life! Think of all those pretty clothes and pretty shoes packed away in my trunk. I must have another look. (seizes the trunk sitting on the brick bed beside her, and has just removed the lid when her mother enters the room)

Mother Li: (shaking her finger at Beautiful Flower authoritatively) Now you just let that trunk alone. You spend all of your time looking at those clothes and make me more work in a day, than all the rest of the family do in six. Now put your clothes on quickly, for your 3rd brother has already eaten and you must soon be on your way.

Beautiful Flower: Has father eaten too? He's going with us.

Mother Li: No your father has gone over to neighbor Chang's to borrow his animal. He's coming right now.

Father Li: Now hustle little miss, eat your food quickly for it's time we were on the road. (sits down on the edge of brick bed with his bowl of food, and Mother Li brings Beautiful Flower a bowl of food.)

Bring a Son: I wish I were going to school too. I believe I could learn to read and I love to sing. (Sighs) But it's too late for I'm already married. I wish that missionary had come to our place when I was just a little girl, and started me to reading.

Mother Li: Now don't begin to complain and bemoan your fate, you've got a good father-in-law and a good mother-in-law, and your job is to be a good daughter-in-law. I don't see much use in girls learning to anyhow. I never went to school, and I doubt if I'd be any better off if I had. A girl can learn to cook and sew and take care of babies without going to school. (Busily combing Beautiful Flower's hair) If your 3rd brother weren't going to school also, I'd never give my consent to this little "Piece" going either, and even so I can't quite rest my heart. I'm afraid we'll regret this move.

Father Li: (Making a loud noise, sucking the noodles into his mouth.) You are always worrying about the future, mostly about things that never happen.

...the house ... the house ... the house ...

I wanted to go out to see the house, but I couldn't ...

... the house ... the house ... the house ...

And I'll ... the house ... the house ...

... the house ... the house ... the house ...

... the house ... the house ... the house ...

... the house ... the house ... the house ...

... the house ... the house ... the house ...

... the house ... the house ... the house ...

... the house ... the house ... the house ...

... the house ... the house ... the house ...

... the house ... the house ... the house ...

Mother Li: Alright have your way. You've always had it and I suppose you always will, but blame yourself if anything happens.

Beautiful Flower: Don't be unhappy, Mother. I'll go to school and by and by I'll be a teacher, and make money and buy you pretty clothes, and pretty comforts, and good things to eat.

Mother Li: (Sneeringly) Oh, pretty clothes and pretty things are all you think about. You've got plenty of pride sticking in your heart for a nine year old.

Third Son: (Entering) Are you folks going to eat all day? You must have more food to eat than I had. Come along, it's time to be going.

Father: Yes, get your hat and come on. Bring a Son, put those fried cakes into the saddle bag to eat on the way and we'll be off.

Beautiful Flower: Goodbye Mother, I'll write you a Letter before long, and one of the boys can read it for you.

Mother Li: (wiping a tear) Goodbye second girl!

CURTAIN FALLS

Two years later

Scene 2:

Room in Li's home. Mother sitting on brick bed sewing Father Li sitting on bench at the end of brick bed smoking long Chinese pipe.

Mother Li: You seem unusually quiet today. I haven't heard you say a word the whole day long. Are you unhappy or aren't you feeling well?

Father Li: (Sulkily) Both! I'm regretting the fact that we were so stupid when Beautiful Flower was two weeks old as to promise her to that neighbor's home, for they say that son of theirs is only a half wit.

Mother Li: Oh I see, still worrying about Beautiful Flower. Well, you don't need to say "WE" in that case, for that was all your own idea. You certainly were displeased when that child was born, just because she was a girl, and all the folks within sixty miles of us knew it too. Now that you are regretting your rash act, don't try to say that it was "WE" that did it.

Father Li: Yes blame it all on me again. Everything that goes wrong in this household is my fault of course. Alright if it WAS my fault then I have the authority to change it, and that I'll do.

Mother Li: You can't do anything now to change it without spending a lost of money, and you know we don't have it.

Father Li: Never mind, you just let that to me. It's marvellous the way that child has developed, and her report cards show that she's at the head of her class in school and to think of marrying her to a half-wit. Oh, I just won't do it if we have to have a lawsuit to annul it.

Mother Li: Well, that's exactly what it'll come to if you try to do anything now, and what's more we'll get the worst of the bargain. We've got NO money to spend on lawsuits, Mr. Li (sarcastically). I'm sorry too, that YOU

Mother Li: were so stupid, but it's too late now, and no use to cry over spilled milk. Beautiful Flower may be bright and smart and all that, but when she and 3rd Son were home for vacation, I noticed one thing that she, yes both of them in fact, were a little too smart.

Father Li: (Quickly and excitedly) What was that?

Mother Li: You're blind as a bat if you didn't see that. More than once when we were worshipping the gods, I saw them look slyly at each other and grin, and then sober up quickly when they saw we were looking at them. I'll tell you that doesn't look good to me. I'm just afraid they are being influenced by the foreign religion.

Father Li: Oh you are always looking for trouble. They are only youngsters, and why pay any attention to little things like that. Children are always full of mischief, and you can't expect them to take religion as seriously as old folks.

Mother Li: Well you'll see. I knew from the beginning that that very thing would happen and that's why I said on the day the children left, that I was afraid we'd regret that move. You men always think we women are so stupid, but I want you to know that we can often see farther ahead than you men can, with all of your wisdom and cleverness.

Father Li: Same old story again "I told you so." Well I've got a plan, money'll do anything and I can buy the girl back if I have \$250.00 and I know where I can get it.

Mother Li: \$250.00! Where on earth would you get it, and even if you had it, how stupid of you to pay that much money in order to keep your own girl, when others think they are might lucky when they can sell their girls for the handsome sum of \$100.00 or even \$50.00. Sometimes I think you act as though you might be losing your senses.

Father Li: Never mind, I'll get the money alright, and you'll be none the worse for it, so rest your heart. I'm determined that nobody but a clever, rich educated man can be husband to MY daughter! (Leaves the room)

Mother Li: YOUR daughter, Hm!!

CURTAIN FALLS.

Act IV.

After five years in Mission School

Scene 1:

Dormitory in Mission School where Beautiful Flower (now 14) and five of her classmates are busy on their handwork.

Beautiful Flower: Just think girls, if I'd never come to Mission School I might now be working on my trousseau, getting ready to be married to an idiot, instead of making this lace.

A Christian Classmate: Well I should say you are a lucky girl. You should be most thankful to our Father in Heaven.

Beautiful Flower: I certainly do, but I would not dare tell my father so. He wants all the credit, and of course he does deserve a lot of it, but he would never believe that he was only an instrument in God's

Beautiful Flower: hands. I could just weep for him day and night if it would do any good. Oh dear, my heart is so heavy. (Bursts into tears)

Chorus of Voices: Why, Beautiful Flower, what's the matter.

1st Classmate: A few minutes ago I thought you were so happy because your engagement had been annulled.

2nd Classmate: (Very close friend) She's anything but happy. I've noticed that for two weeks.

3rd Classmate: Beautiful Flower, you're just working too hard, that's what's wrong with you. You're getting so thin and you don't eat half as much as you should.

Beautiful Flower: (Still sobbing) I'm not working too hard. I'm not working hard enough and I'll perhaps fail in all my examinations, but I can't study with this burden on my heart! (weeps bitterly)

4th Classmate: (with arm around B. F.'s neck) Beautiful Flower, please don't cry so, what can we do for you? Has any of us hurt your feelings?

Beautiful Flower: No indeed, no one has hurt my feelings, (sobbing), but I've been so unhappy ever since the revival meeting, that I know I've been acting strangely, and no wonder you think I might have been offended. I'm the only one in the class now that is not a Christian, and I want to be with all my heart and dare not. Every time I go home I must worship idols to please my parents. At first it was a joke to me, but I can't do it anymore, and as much as I love my parents, especially my adoring father, I just can't bear to think of going home for the summer. O, I just don't know what to do! (Cries)

5th Classmate: (kindly but with conviction) Beautiful Flower, there is only one thing to do, and that's ask God to change your father's heart. I'm sure He can do it. We'll all pray for you and for him, and would you mind my asking Miss Ming to pray for him too?

Beautiful Flower: Oh yes do. I'd just love to have her pray for him, but I haven't had the courage to ask her. Today in the Bible Class when she explained that text, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me" I just thought I couldn't stay in class, and Miss Wang used the same text in evening worship last evening, and I couldn't sleep all night because of it. It just seemed that Christ was saying to me all night, and then for Miss Ming to take it up in the Bible Class today, has just been too much for me.

2nd Classmate: (Thoughtfully) It seems to me Beautiful Flower, as though the only thing for you to do is to make up your mind to be a Christian regardless of what your parents may think or do. Perhaps that's the only way to change your father's heart. If you wait for your father's heart to be changed, you may both be lost.

Beautiful Flower: (Picking up courage) I'm thoroughly convinced that I won't have a minute of happiness until I do. I was never so miserable in all my life. I can't study, I can't sleep, I can't eat.

3rd. Classmate: I heard one of the evangelists say there were to be two more baptisms next Sunday, why not make up your mind and be baptized then?

Beautiful Flower: Oh, what a relief that would be!

5th Classmate: Come on, Beautiful Flower, let's go to Miss Ming and tell her you have made up your mind to be a Christian, and want to be baptized.

4th Classmate: Or else call her here.

1st Classmate: Yes, invite her to come here and we'll all talk it over together, now that we all know about it. Shall we, Beautiful Flower?

Beautiful Flower: Oh, yes, please do! (4th and 5th classmates disappear)

2nd Classmate: Don't worry, Beautiful Flower. She'll at least be sympathetic.
(enter Miss Ming and the two school girls)

2nd Classmate: Miss Ming, Beautiful Flower has made up her mind that she wants to be a Christian, and she would like to be baptized on Sunday.

Miss Ming: (with arms around Beautiful Flower) Well I'm certainly happy to hear that my dear! These are tears of joy are they? What about the attitude of your parents, will they rejoice or object?

Beautiful Flower: That's just the trouble Miss Ming, they will object, and seriously.

Miss Ming: (Thoughtfully) I see. Perhaps we'd better go and talk it over with them first. I'd be glad to, as I haven't seen your father since you were just a tiny tot about eight years old, I guess.

Beautiful Flower: It's no use Miss Ming, I know just exactly what he'll say. When I'm a Christian, I'll go myself and talk to them, and if they turn me out, they may turn me out, for Jesus said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." That's the text that brought the crisis, Miss Ming, and I can't stand it any longer. "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."

Miss Ming: Alright, Beautiful Flower, we'll do just as you say, and in the meantime we'll all pray that this will be the circumstance that will change your father's heart. (Looking at watch) It's bed-time and you must all go to bed soon, I think we'll spend just a short time praying for Beautiful Flower's father before we retire. I'm sure Beautiful Flower will appreciate it, and then perhaps she can go to bed happy.

CURTAIN FALLS

Scene 2: Reception Room at Girls' Mission School. Beautiful Flower and her Brother.

Beautiful Flower: Third brother, I've made up my mind to be a Christian, and I'm to be baptized on Sunday.

Third Brother: Oh my! little sister, you surely have courage. How dare you do it? What will father say? We'll just keep it a secret. I'd almost like to be a Christian myself, but I'm not ready to decide just yet. I'll wait and see how you fare. If you get through it alive, maybe I'll try it too.

Beautiful Flower: No, I don't think we should keep it a secret. I don't believe in being a secret follower of Christ, nor do I believe in putting it

Beautiful Flower: off just because father objects, when I know it's the proper thing to do. Third Brother, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me." Those are the words of Christ, and they have helped me to make my decision.

Third Brother: Well, little sister, do as you please, but I think you're very foolish to let it out if you can avoid it. I just know it will raise a big row, not only in our home but in the whole village.

Beautiful Flower: I'd like to be frank and open about it. I don't want to act a lie. I feel it would be so much better to let him know it right away. I was going to ask you to write a letter and tell him all about it, but---

Third Brother: (Decidedly) No sis, I won't do it. It's only two weeks till school is out. Wait at least that long. Tell him when you get home, if you're too conscientious to keep it. If you send him word now, that will probably be the end of your school work. If he finds it out he'll be right after you. You'll not even get to finish your year's work and not get your diploma. Even without you telling it, I doubt very much if it can be kept a secret till you get home to tell it. You know our village always has a way of finding out things. They usually know all about things before they ever happen.

Beautiful Flower: (perplexed) Well, perhaps it will be alright to wait till I get home. But look here, Third Brother, I don't know whether you pray or not. But if you do, I want you to pray to God to change father's heart, as I think that's the important thing right now. If we could only get him to quit worshipping those idols! If you pray earnestly, perhaps this is the thing that will do the work. Will you pray with me?

Third Brother: (Embarrassed) Well, ah, sure I'll pray to please you if for no other reason, but I'll tell you right now, little sister, you might as well try to change a tadpole into a guinea pig, as to change father's heart.

Beautiful Flower: (Disappointed) Well, if that's the way you feel about it, don't bother to pray.

CURTAIN FALLS

Scene 3:

The enraged father, having heard the news of his daughter's conversion, arrives at the Mission Compound in the city, and raps loudly and angrily at the gate.

Gateman: Who are you and what's your business?

Mr. Li: I'm Li and I've come for that obstreperous daughter of mine. Tell her to come to the gate at once.

Gateman: Hm, you go on through to the school gate and call her yourself.

Farmer Li: No, I don't want to see the Mission School or anybody that has anything to do with it, but you tell my daughter to get here to the gate as fast as she can.

(Gateman walks off grumbling to himself, and returns followed by Beautiful Flower)

Farmer Li: Your're a pretty thing aren't you? Get your bed-sack, your clothes and all of your belongings, call your brother, and both of you come right home with me. A dutiful daughter you are, to disgrace your father in this manner! (Angrily) Off with you and get your things!

Beautiful Flower: (Pale and trembling) Alright father. (The father paces back and forth in front of the Compound gate, till the girl returns with her brother.)

Father Li: (to boy) And you, you scamp, why did you allow your sister to disgrace the family in this fashion? You're old enough to have better sense.

Third Brother: I had nothing to do with it, dad.

CURTAIN FALLS

Scene 4:

The Li home in the village. Mother sitting on brick bed working at a wadded garment, when the father and school children arrive. B. F. runs into the house quickly, and bows politely to her mother, whose only response is a disgusted look.

Father: You silly girl, you've got to do one of two things, - renounce your foreign religion, or take a sound beating. Which will it be?
want

Beautiful Flower: You may beat me to death if you/to, but I won't give up my Christ, if that's what you call "my foreign religion."

Father: That's certainly big talk for a snip of a girl like you. I know what I'll do, I'll sell you to Neighbor Yang for a small sum, to be the wife of his ignorant son. How does that appeal to you? (B. F. sobs) Where's your big talk now? Are you ready to give up?

Beautiful Flower: No, I am not.

Father: Alright into the same dark cellar you go, from which you escaped eight years ago. Verily if you hadn't escaped that time you wouldn't be going into it at this time. When you escape this time it will be your wedding day! And that's not far off. (Pushes her into the cellar.) If that foreign devil had never arrived at this village, all this trouble would have been averted. Eldest Son, (calls loudly) Nail up that cellar window, with strong boards, GOOD AND TIGHT.

Father: Oh shut up, I get tired hearing that. Third Son, feed that animal quickly for I want to go over to Neighbor Yang's this evening yet. (To the mother) Hurry up with that food, you're as slow as a snail. (Swallow a bowl of noodles in a few minutes time, and is off to make arrangements for the wedding).

Mother: (to 3rd son). Oh my! (sighs) will troubles never end in this household? Third Son, I want you to go over quickly to your older sister's home and see if she can come over tonight. If she can, you wait and come with her. It will be moonlight tonight, and I want her here. Oh such a mess as thing are in!

Eldest Son: Say, I think the old man must be going crazy. There's no sense in such actions. If little sister had done something terribly wicked, I wouldn't blame him. What's she done that's going to affect our household, I'd like to know.

Mother: Fourth Son, take this bowl of food to your sister. (takes it and returns with it) What's the matter, won't she eat it? Is she still crying?

Fourth Son: No, she isn't crying, but she says she doesn't want it.

Second Son: No wonder she doesn't want it. Why don't you give her something decent? Nothing but insipid millet soup after a trip like that!

Mother: That's just what your father ordered for her, and that's the law.

Second Son: That's right, the old man's King.

Fourth Son: Say brother, I never heard you talk like that before. What's come over you? You and father usually have the same ideas about everthing. (To mother) Little sister wants me to get her Bible for her, shall I?

Mother: No indeed, don't you dare. If father should come home and find that foreign book in there, he'd beat us all to death. At any rate it's too dark in there to read. Just tell her you daren't give it to her. Foolish child what's come over her anyhow?

Eldest Son: Well, I have no use for the foreign religion myself, but I see no good in raising a rumpus like this over it!

Mother: (Despairingly) Who does, but the old man you call your father?

CURTAIN FALLS

Scene 5:

The next morning in the Li Home. Father returns and relates plans for the wedding which is to take place in two days.

Father Li: Well, the deed is done and day after tomorrow, Miss Beautiful Flower (sarcastically) will be the bride of Old Yang's son. I tried to get one hundred dollars out of the old gentleman, the girl being educated. He would not give it, so I let her go for seventy-five dollars.

Mother: (with a sigh) \$75.00 and three years ago you paid \$250.00 to annul her engagement! A clever piece of business, that.

Father: Now you just keep your mouth shut. I'm managing this affair, and I don't want anymore of your lip. You know I've never been given to wife-beating but not because I can't do it, and if you want a demonstration, just interfere with this business once more. What's the girl doin' by this time, still bawlin' her eyes out I spose? How much has she eaten during these 24 hours? (Silence) Well, hasn't anybody given her a bite to eat (angrily). You know I promised her a bowl of millet three times a day, and nothing more. I expect every member of this household to abide by that decision. If you don't, there'll be trouble in another corner. (loudly) How much has she eaten, I ask you?

Mother: She's been offered three bowls, one last evening, and two today, but she hasn't tasted it.

Father: Well, that's up to her, just so she's had the opportunity. Second Son, did you put those boards in there for/to sleep on, as I told you?
her

Second Son: (indifferently) Of course I did.

Father: (eyeing him) Well, you needn't act smart about it. It seems like you've al-

Father: got a chip on your should. (Looks at watch) Well, this day is half gone, and it's time to get busy on the preparations.

Mother: (nonchalantly) What about the wedding clothes, are we supposed to get those ready in a day?

Father: She can wear just what she's got. Plenty good enough. Folks won't expect much in a case like this.

Bring a Son: No, mother, you needn't worry about that. Beautiful Flower has lots of nice clothes, even tho they aren't bridal clothes. It'll be all the same to the Yang home, so long as they are worth money. They'll probably all be sold in a short time. Those folks have no regard for principle.

CURTAIN FALLS

Scene 6:

In the back yard at the cellar window 11 O'clock at night. Beautiful Flower is rescued by her third brother. (This scene could be staged behind the curtain if not convenient to have cellar.

Third Brother: (softly and cautiously tapping at the boards on the window.) Little sister, come quickly. I'm going to rescue you or lose my life in the attempt.

Beautiful Flower: (from within, badly scared) Oh, Brother, is it you? You scared me half to death. What do you want, and why aren't you in bed?

Third Brother: Yes it is I. I want YOU. I'm not going to bed till morning and perhaps not then. Be very, very, quiet (pulling off boards) there! Come out quickly, and don't talk or make any noise. (They go hand in hand through the big gate, which opens and closes without a single creak, when far enough away they begin to talk)

Beautiful Flower: Now we needn't fear to talk, so please tell me quickly, what is your plan, where are we going? What will happen to you if father finds out you have helped me to escape?

Third Brother: We're going back to the Mission School, of course. Where else could we go at a time like this?

Beautiful Flower: But when father finds us both gone, he'll know that 's where we are and come right after us.

Third Brother: Don't worry, I don't expect to be "gone" when morning comes. I expect to be asleep on my own bed by 4 o'clock in the morning. At least I'll appear to be asleep, by the time father is stirring.

Beautiful Flower: Oh you NEVER can do it! It will be more than 2 o'clock by the time we get to town. How can you ever get back home by 4? Remember father is always up by half past four or five o'clock at the very latest.

Brother: I've got it all planned, Sister. I'm borrowing a bike and I'll be back by 4 o'clock.

Beautiful Flower: Oh, is that the idea? Well, even at that we'll have to step lively. If it weren't nice and moonlight we never could make it. (The two

Beautiful Flower: keep walking round and round on the platform as if journeying.)
Brother I surely do appreciate this act of kindness on your part,
but, dear me, (sighs) I can't help wondering what will be the out-
come of it all, both for you and myself.

Brother: Now cut out the sighing and the tears and keep stepping it off lively. You-
'll spoil the whole affair if your footsteps begin to lag.

Beautiful Flower: Well, you must remember I'm tired. I've hardly slept for two nights
and have eaten very little food for two days.

Brother: I know you're tired, but you'd be "tireded" still if you'd marry that Yang
idiot, and probably get less to eat per day too.

CURTAIN FALLS

Scene 7:

The following day, 6:00 A. M. in the Li home.

Mother Li: (Decidedly worried) Bring a Son, take this bowl of food in to your sister
and stay with her till she eats it. Do your best to persuade her to eat.
(to self) Poor child, if she doesn't soon eat, she'll die. I'm sick with
grief myself to think of the poor child marrying that Yang thing today.

Bring a Son: (Excitedly returning from cellar room with bowl of food.) Mother, she's
gone! The boards are off the window and she's nowhere to be found!!

Mother Li: (pale with fear) Go quickly and tell your father! (hastily disappears to
investigate)

1st son: (to 4th son) That's just what I expected! She's jumped into the well to a-
void being married today!

4th Son: Come quickly, let's look! (Father, mother, and older daughter reappear weep-
ing and wailing.)

Mother: She's taken her own life, she's taken her own life! My darling child has tak-
en her own life, she's DEAD! Oh, may the gods pityus! (Father speechless)

4th Son: (returning) She's not in the well, we've looked!

Father: (Loudly and vehemently) Go my sons! Everyone of you scour the village!
Look into all the wells! Beseech the neighbors to join in the search for our
lost daughter! (drops into chair, wailing) Oh, where is the Beautiful
Flower of my Home? Has she taken her own life in her desperation, or has
she been stolen from, and fallen into evil hands? Shall I never see her
again? Oh my daughter, my daughter, where are you hiding?

Neighbor Yang: (arriving on the scene) Ha! Ha! Now I understand your trick! You're
putting on this show to cheat me out of the girl and the money too.
I'm/so stupid as you think. You'll suffer for this, just you see!
We all wondered at the bargain. Now we see through it. You'll not
escape the clutches of the law, old man and you needn't think it!

First Son: What are you talking about? Have you gone crazy? We know no more about
the disappearance of my sister than you do. I think you'd better dry
up till you know what you're talking about. Plenty of time then, to blow
off steam!

Father Li: Eldest Son, go to the chest and bring the silver and return it to Neighbor

Father Li: Yang. Even if we find Beautiful Flower I cannot force her to marry so against her will. (Eldest Son goes out) (Father Li collapses, is laid on the brick bed, fourth son fans him desperately and 2nd son tries to make him drink. 3rd son continues to rub his hands. Mother and Bring a Son weep piteiously.)

Eldest Son: (Returns) Here is your money, Mr. Yang. Now, will you please go and leave us alone. We indeed eat bitterness. (Exit Mr. Yang.)

Third Son: (calmly) I suggest that we pray to the Christians' God and ask Him to take care of our little sister.

Mother Li: (cautiously) Sh! Sh! Sh! For goodness sake don't say that!

Father Li: (rousing) Oh yes, go ahead, GO AHEAD, do anything! Pray that my daughter may be brought back alive. ALIVE, mark you, (shaking finger) Yes, I'll even worship that God myself, if he brings back my daughter ALIVE! (loud and earnestly) O God of my lovely daughter, bring her back to me ALIVE, and I even I, will worship and serve you the rest of my days! (groans, and seems to collapse again.)

CURTAIN FALLS

Scene 8:

Miss Ming's office in Mission School at Showyang, Miss Ming, two teachers, five classmates and Beautiful Flower present. All seated as at close of prayer meeting.

Miss Ming: Well, since our prayer meeting, I have a feeling that there is no way out, except to go with Beautiful Flower to her home and talk with her father. We just don't know, but perhaps the Lord is using this very circumstance to bring that man to Christ. We've been praying to the Lord to change his heart, and perhaps only something drastic like this will do the work.

Woman Evangelist: I feel the same way about it. He may be going through some terrible struggles right now for all we know.

Miss Wang: That's just what I was thinking. Our God is a prayer-answering God, and I just can not believe that His Spirit is not now working with Beautiful Flower's father.

Miss Ming: Beautiful Flower, are you willing for a couple of us to take you back home and talk to your father about the whole situation?

Beautiful Flower: I am not only willing, but would appreciate it more than I can tell. If his heart is still unchanged I must marry Neighbor Yang's son. I'll make the best of it. I feel that it will be all off when I get home again. I'm not afraid to go back.

Miss Ming: Miss Wang, suppose you and I take Beautiful Flower home today?

Miss Wang: I'll be glad to go with you Miss Ming.

Miss Ming: Alright, I'll tell the gateman to hire three animals and a driver, and we'll be off just as soon as possible.

CURTAIN FALLS

Scene 9:

Li home in the village. Father lying exhausted upon the brick bed, mother and daughter eyes red with weeping sitting on the edge of brick bed and three sons standing.

4th Son: (rushing in, excitedly) Oh mother, Beautiful Flower is coming, and the foreign teacher with her!

Mother and brothers: (rushing to door) What, Beautiful Flower coming!

Beautiful Flower: (bursting into tears) Mother. (embraces her)

Mother: Oh, where have you been my child, and why do you bring such sorrow and trouble into our lives? (foreign teacher talks with mother while Beautiful Flower sits by her father on the bed trying to rouse and comfort him.)

Beautiful Flower: Father, don't be sad, I've returned. Please forgive me for running away.

Miss Ming: When Beautiful Flower returned to us the other night we scarcely knew what to do. After praying to our God about it, we felt that He wanted us to bring her back to you. (to father, still lying on bed) Mr. Li, won't you please forgive your daughter for running away? She is a fine girl, and we do hope she'll not have to marry a wicked man. Is there anything we can do to help out in this difficult situation?

Father Li: (weakly submissive) Nothing but praise your God for me, and ask Him to forgive my terrible sin! (exhausted)

Miss Ming: We shall be glad to do that. If you return to our God and your Heavenly Father, as your daughter has returned to you, He will abundantly pardon.

Father Li: Praise the Heavenly Father! Praise the Heavenly Father!

Miss Wang: Mr. Li, your daughter has been very happy since she learned to know Jesus and accepted Him as her Savior. We hope you too will believe in Him, Accept Him, and be made happy.

Father Li: (gathering more strength) I do believe! I've promised! I'm happy!

Mother Li: Yes, we've all made up our minds to be Christians if the Christian's God would bring our daughter back. She IS a good girl, that we all know, and she's been different too since she found your Christ.

Miss Ming: Praise the Lord! How happy we all are! Truly "A Little Chill Shall Lead Them!" Let's all sing, "Since Jesus Came into My Heart."

What a wonderful change in my heart has been wrought,

Since Jesus came into my heart.

There is joy in my heart which for long I had sought,

Since Jesus came into my heart.

Since Jesus came into my heart, since Jesus came into my heart,

Floods of joy o'er my soul, like the sea billows roll,

Since Jesus came into my heart!"

(All join in the singing, even the father rises and sings, with a smile lighting his pale face.)

